



STOP GRAND JURY ATTACKS AGAINST THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE
MOVEMENT AND THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT:

SUPPORT THE ARMED CLANDESTINE MOVEMENTS:

FIGHT U.S. IMPERIALISM! BUILD A REVOLUTIONARY RESISTANCE MOVEMENT!

May 19th Communist Organization
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On January 9, 1984, Silvia Baraldini and Shelley Miller will go on trial in Brooklyn for "criminal contempt" because they refused to collaborate with a federal grand jury which the U.S. government is using to investigate and attack the FALN and the revolutionary Puerto Rican Independence Movement. In this particular trial the targets of U.S. government repression are members of May 19th Communist Organization and the New Movement in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence and Socialism, both North American anti-imperialist organizations. In addition to trying to intimidate North Americans from supporting Puerto Rican independence, the U.S. government is trying to crush any revolutionary developments among white anti-imperialists. This is the focus of these particular grand jury subpoenas. By resisting the grand jury, Silvia Baraldini and Shelley Miller are exposing the illegal use of the grand jury and providing examples of how to turn repression into resistance.

In this period of economic and political crisis for U.S. imperialism, we are witnessing both the strengthening of national liberation struggles like in El Salvador and Lebanon, and increasing U.S. military aggression and drive toward World War III. We are also seeing increasing resistance to U.S. imperialist war in Europe and inside the U.S. Because the U.S. needs a stable home base to wage war, the government is moving to crush this early resistance. Silvia and Shelley's non-collaboration continues the resistance of anti-imperialists Alan Berkman and Eve Rosahn, who were targeted in a 1982 grand jury attack against the Black Liberation Army and the New Afrikan Independence Movement and its supporters. It is setting principles that are critical for anti-imperialist and progressive struggles overall.

Since this is a period when the U.S. is trying to maintain hegemony, it is waging war on many fronts -- overtly and covertly, directly or through its puppet regimes, armies or mercenaries. Puerto Rico, the U.S. direct colony since 1898, has become even more strategic for U.S. interests. It is the key U.S. war base in the Caribbean, with access to Central America, Africa and Europe. The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Jean Kirkpatrick, said that one of the top accomplishments of the U.S. in the United Nations last year was the blocking of the question of Puerto Rican independence from debate. This gives insight as to why the grand jury offensive is being waged at the same time. Particularly the growing struggles in Central America threatening U.S. control make Puerto Rico critical to the U.S. With El Salvador's revolutionary forces moving to liberate more territory, with Nicaragua battle-ready to defend its revolution and fight the contras, the U.S. needs Puerto Rico as a base for invasion into Central America. The invasion of Grenada was rehearsed in Puerto Rico in 1981, in a maneuver called operation Ocean Venture. The longterm U.S. strategy for Puerto Rico, called the 2020 Plan, intends to transform the island into a network of open-pit mines for militarily strategic minerals, high-tech industrial parks and major military bases which will depopulate the island and destroy its ecology.

Accompanying the U.S. drive toward war is an ideological struggle to build consensus in the people in the U.S. that the unprecedented violence and genocide against a vast majority of the world's

people is normal and necessary to combat "international terrorism and communism." Orchestrated media offensives portray freedom fighters from just national liberation struggles as terrorists. The U.S. projects international conspiracies, hiding the truth that freedom fighters emerge from their peoples struggle against imperialism's violent domination of their nations. Through these lies, the U.S. tries to justify its total disregard of human rights, international law, national sovereignty and human morality -- whether it be the invasion of the sovereign Black nation of Grenada or the unrelenting war against the people of El Salvador or Lebanon. And inside the United States, these lies justify the covert counterinsurgency wars against freedom fighters and revolutionary organizations in the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, the New Afrikan Independence Movement, the struggle for socialist reunification of Mexico and the white anti-imperialist movement.

On the same day as this trial begins, the U.S. is bringing to trial in Chicago, four Puerto Rican patriots. Three of them, Alejandrina Torres, Alberto Rodriguez, and Edwin Cortes, have declared that they are combatants for Puerto Rican independence. The fourth, Jose Rodriguez, declared himself a political prisoner. The U.S. is charging them with "seditious conspiracy" to keep up the lies and illusions. As these patriots defiantly argue, this charge, issued by the nation that violently invaded and still occupies their country by force of arms, is the "impossible crime." How can they be accused of sedition when they are fighting for what is rightfully theirs -- their homeland? The U.S. is the war criminal trying to destroy the only obstacle to their plans for Puerto Rico -- the revolutionary Puerto Rican Independence Movement. It is the actions of the FALN and the clandestine organizations on the island, along with the captured Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, the political prisoners and grand jury resisters that are examples of the Puerto Rican nation's will to win.

The Political Basis of the Grand Jury Offensive

This current grand jury emerges from the U.S. government's ongoing investigation of the FALN. Silvia and Shelley's subpoenas; those of Carlos Noya and Federico Cintron Fiallo; and the criminal contempt trial of Julio Rosado, Andres Rosado, Maria Cueto, Steven Guerra and Ricardo Romero all occurred in the months following the FALN bombings of 4 centers of U.S. government repression on New Years Eve, 1982. The grand jury offensive must be understood in the context of the revolutionary developments in the struggle of Puerto Rican people for independence and the threat this poses for U.S. imperialism.

The opening of a second front of struggle within the U.S. by the FALN in 1974 came after a decade of struggle and developments in Puerto Rico of revolutionary solutions to the problem of U.S. colonial domination. They were part of an armed response to violent attacks by the U.S. counterinsurgency forces against an increasingly militant mass movement in Puerto Rico. Their emergence created a dividing line between revolutionary and reformist strategies, both in Puerto Rico and the U.S. The FALN began its armed propaganda actions at a time when an electoral strategy to vote for independence was being followed by many Puerto Rican forces. The FALN made it

clear that to follow this strategy would be to accept genocide: the U.S. will never voluntarily grant Puerto Rico its independence. The FALN's existence and actions within the U.S. "brought the war home" to the colonizer's own territory, demonstrating to imperialism that peace would be sacrificed so long as the exploitation and oppression of the Puerto Rican nation continues.

The entire North American left was forced to address the question of revolutionary armed struggle here. Reform and accommodation to the system were being involuntarily contradicted by the FALN, and much of the U.S. left moved to condemn their actions. Revolutionary struggle within the borders of the U.S. empire were somehow exempted from the dynamics of every other struggle against imperialism in the world; U.S. corporations and corporate and military leaders were off limits according to the positions of the left. While some of the left could applaud national liberation through people's war in Vietnam, Africa or Central America, this battle of the oppressed inside the borders of the U.S., as well as the struggle for a new socialist society by those in the oppressing nation, could "somehow" come through peaceful reform and accommodation with the system.

North American communists in a small number of organizations, including May 19th Communist Organization, supported the FALN aggressively throughout its first years of actions. For example, when William Morales was captured we fought to recognize him as a hero, not a terrorist. When William escaped we celebrated this victory, and when the 11 Puerto Rican Prisoners of War were captured, we argued that these FALN combatants had to be supported.

The U.S. government was quick to respond. It began a search and destroy mission against the FALN and attempted to crush or render powerless the revolutionary independence movement. The U.S. government had to try to halt the very dangerous development of an armed clandestine movement and responding independence forces within the Puerto Rican community within the United States that was willing to fight. It had to interrupt the capacity of these forces to wage ideological struggle with and influence the revolutionary direction of the anti-imperialist movement within the U.S. oppressor nation.

The most recent developments in the past year by new armed clandestine groups have taken the leadership of the FALN inside the belly of the beast. At a time when the Puerto Rican Independence Movement was suffering blows as freedom fighter William Morales and the four in Chicago were captured, the Armed Resistance Unit bombed a Navy computer center on August 17th in solidarity with the struggles in Central America and the Caribbean. They argued in their communique that this action was "a call directed to all who support the peoples of Latin America and oppose U.S. aggression to embrace the struggle for independence and socialism for Puerto Rico. Since 1898, the U.S. military occupation of the island to maintain it as a colony has been and is the most direct form of imperialist aggression against the nations of this hemisphere." They go on to argue that "the imperialist war machine can be defeated through a protracted resistance and growing armed struggle. It is the time for progressive North Americans to renounce the empire and take our own first steps down the long road to revolution and a new socialist world. It is the only path that can bring peace, end fascist violence, and promote the full development of humanity."

Why Were Silvia Baraldini and Shelley Miller Subpoenaed?

FBI Director William Webster pointed to the activities of the May 19th Communist Organization as one of the justifications for the new FBI guidelines, which give them a free hand to surveil and infiltrate progressive organizations. Silvia Baraldini, a member of the May 19th Communist Organization, was convicted in the RICO ('Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act') conspiracy trial against the Black Liberation Army and the whole breadth of the New Afrikan Independence Movement, of aiding the Black liberation struggle. Sen. Jeremiah Denton, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, went on television news following the November 1983 Armed Resistance Unit bombing of the u.s. Capitol. He held M19CO responsible for the political climate of resistance and armed clandestine activity growing in this country. This is a double-barreled attack of holding a public revolutionary organization responsible for clandestine activities -- and of holding an organization within the white oppressor nation responsible for revolutionary struggle growing in the oppressed nations. Besides offering a justification for the state's attacks, it serves to slander and denigrate the leadership by the national liberation struggles of revolution within the u.s. and worldwide by portraying them as the witless followers of white people. The real reason that M19CO is under attack is that it has taken on the particular responsibility of building, in its very early stages, a revolutionary practice within the oppressor nation which unmasks this system and fights to destroy it.

Imperialism fosters the myth that this is a democratic society where oppressed and exploited people have "rights" and where reforms can be peacefully won. M19 is trying to build a revolutionary strategy that shatters that illusion, and challenges the system's strategy to win the "hearts and minds" of the white oppressor nation. That is why we fully support the development of armed clandestine organizations -- the Black Liberation Army, the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional, the Armed Resistance Unit, the United Freedom Front -- which offer critical leadership in building a politics of protracted people's war in the oppressed nations and class war for socialism in the white oppressor nation.

We understand that though we are building a "public" organization, the state obviously defines our work as "illegal" because it is revolutionary. We need to build our struggle watchful of the eyes and ears of the state. We must be guided by a clandestine mentality in every part of our work if we are to survive. With this consciousness, the public movement can reflect the leadership of recent armed developments by targeting u.s. war corporations, military installations and political police with militant campaigns that contribute to an overall revolutionary strategy.

These are the seeds of a revolutionary strategy which challenges imperialism's plans for the white oppressor nation. The system is depending on white people to form a stable social base, to join the ranks of the imperialist military, to build white supremacist shock troops like the klan -- to actively fight for, or at least go along with, the building of war and fascism.

Just as the struggle of the Vietnamese people did in the late 60s and early 70s, the determination and power of the peoples of Central America and the Middle East are pushing more and more white people to look at the true nature of the society we are a part of. Movements are emerging that oppose u.s. intervention in Central America, and protest the growth of imperialism's nuclear arsenal. Imperialism is trying to control and direct that outrage; it is trying to substitute a reformist and narrow leadership for the true revolutionary leadership provided by the national liberation struggles. That is why a revolutionary force within the oppressor nation that defines the entire imperialist system and the imperialist ruling class as the enemy; that exposes reformist legislative solutions as no solutions at all; that plants the seeds to build a socialist system that will put white working people in control of our own labor and lives is a threat that must be smashed, even in these early stages.

u.s. Government Counterinsurgency

The grand jury is one part of a larger u.s. counterinsurgency strategy whose aims are to encircle and destroy the armed clandestine movements, criminalize all revolutionary activity, and repress people's dissent and struggle. That campaign, which is escalating every day, includes the manhunt for fugitives by the elite police/FBI Joint Terrorist Task Force, raids on homes and political organizations, torture -- like that of New Afrikan Freedom Fighter Sekou Odinga, the creation of traitors within the revolutionary movements; the use of anti-Mafia RICO charges against New Afrikan and white anti-imperialist activists, and more. The grand jury attempts to cloak this brutality in the mantle of legality -- it is "judicial terrorism," in the words of Puerto Rican grand jury resister Carlos Noya.

The grand jury was first used against the Puerto Rican Independence Movement in 1936. It has been refined over the past decade in attacks against the anti-war movement, the women's and lesbian movements, the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, the New Afrikan Independence Movement, and the white anti-imperialist movement. The grand jury is designed to gather information which can be used to capture armed clandestine fighters; to intimidate the progressive movements; to create a climate of fear which will push progressive organizations to abandon revolutionary principles and their support for the armed clandestine movements; and, when people refuse to collaborate with this repression, to politically intern leaders and activists.

The u.s. government is in the process of escalating the grand jury attacks from civil contempt (a maximum 18 month jail term supposedly designed to coerce people to cooperate) to criminal contempt (a 'crime' carrying an indefinite jail sentence). Total non-collaboration is the only strategy that can combat grand jury repression. Non-collaboration pulls the 'legal' cover off the grand jury and exposes its political nature as a tool of repression against the revolutionary movements. Non-collaboration makes it clear that the u.s. imperialist state has no legitimacy to 'investigate' the liberation struggles of oppressed peoples, or any part of the revolutionary movements. It affirms support for the right of oppressed nations to self-determination, to wage armed struggle. It denies the government any bits of information to use to smash the revolutionary movements and their armed components. And it asserts the fighting spirit of the resistance movement -- our political principles, our collective strength, and our will to win.

Silvia Baraldini's and Shelley Miller's stand of total non-collaboration argues in practice that the imperialist state has only one purpose: to maintain the economic exploitation and oppression of colonized nations and of the white working class. They, like other grand jury resisters, offer an example of strength and principle to masses of people.

The threat of 18 months in jail has failed to intimidate the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, or the New Movement in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence and Socialism, or to gain intelligence to use against the clandestine forces. Since 1974 when the FALN emerged within u.s. borders, there has been almost constant attack on the Puerto Rican Independence Movement by the grand jury, and yet the u.s. government has been unable to bring one single indictment against clandestine forces because of information extracted from grand jury subpoenees! The federal grand jury investigating the New Afrikan Independence Movement, especially the Black Liberation Army, over the past two years has also suffered defeats because of the unified stance of non-collaboration taken by the 11 New Afrikan and white anti-imperialist resisters (though one New Afrikan activist, Larry Mack, remains in jail).

Non-collaboration forced the u.s. government to escalate to charges of criminal contempt. In so doing, the state itself has had to expose the lie of "normal criminal investigations" with which they have tried to disguise the true nature of the grand jury. At the same time, several positions have emerged within the progressive movements, under the pressure of the state's attacks, which legitimize the grand jury and undermine the principle of non-collaboration.

One incorrect position argues that it is possible to "selectively" collaborate with the grand jury. This position was played out in practice by Farranachi, a Puerto Rican labor lawyer and independentista who was subpoenaed to provide various records of a labor union which he represented. Farranachi reasoned that all of this information was already in the government's hands, and that by complying with the subpoena he could stay out of jail while giving nothing up. Farranachi's actions legitimized the Puerto Rican colonial government and the grand jury. In addition, the state saw his weakness and willingness to compromise and immediately arrested him on frame-up bank robbery charges in the hopes that he would turn traitor. Three years later the charges were dropped before trial, which only confirmed that the only reason they had been brought at all was to pressure Farranachi. Collaboration in any form in the face of repression only encourages more attacks by the state, and sets examples of expediency and unprincipled actions for people.

Another incorrect position argues that the evil of the grand jury is the fact that it attacks "innocent" people who are charged with no crime. This position has serious implications: it justifies the government's strategy of criminalization, which has meant revolutionary activists and freedom fighters being put on trial for criminal charges. It grants legitimacy to the grand jury, and has led some progressive forces to actually call for grand jury investigations of the klan and police brutality.

The grand jury is nothing other than one part of a larger counterinsurgency strategy whose assassinations, raids and arrests gave

a single purpose: to destroy the revolutionary movements. The political prisoners, POWs and captured anti-imperialist freedom fighters who are convicted of criminal charges aren't "guilty" while grand jury witnesses are "innocent." What is at stake in every instance is the right to wage revolution. The entire state apparatus is designed to maintain imperial rule. It is far more strategic for the rulers to disguise that apparatus as an impartial institution concerned with combatting criminal activity, than to let it be exposed as the armed force of imperialism.

At this point in history, the greatest part of the anti-imperialist white left condemns the armed clandestine movements as "adventurist," fully organizes within the state's definitions of legality, and remains silent about counterinsurgency attacks on the revolutionary movements. Such a movement can never really challenge the power of the imperialist state because it doesn't see that state as its implacable enemy. The u.s. is on a counterrevolutionary offensive -- from Reagan going on radio on the anniversary of the victory of the Cuban revolution to try to persuade the Cuban people to abandon their revolution, to u.s. attempts to shore up the sagging Salvadorean army. Domestically, the government is trying to identify its "subversive elements," and move to repress them based on their present or potential threat. With the new FBI guidelines, and criminal contempt proceedings, the government holds out the threat that not only revolutionary armed struggle itself but even support or interest in these developments is illegal.

With this trial, two revolutionary anti-imperialist political activists, in a supposedly "democratic" society, are facing years in jail for refusing to talk to a grand jury which wants to interrogate them about a political document -- a carbon copy of a communique sent to dozens of organizations across the country after the FALN bombed several Wall Street targets in February, 1982. The courthouse where their trial takes place is "protected" by concrete barricades, to remind everyone who enters of the "domestic terrorist threat." The position that Silvia and Shelley have taken exposes the government's true nature, and can help to render the government's fear tactics ineffective. Their examples should be supported and massified.